

VZCZCXYZ0013  
RR RUEHWEB

DE RUEHVI #0267 0571328  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
R 261328Z FEB 08  
FM AMEMBASSY VIENNA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 9544  
INFO RUEHRC/USDA WASHDC  
RUCPDOG/USDOC WASHDC

UNCLAS VIENNA 000267

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FOR OES (STAN SPECHT AND CAMILLE HILL) AND EUR/AGS

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: WIREC 2008 - AUSTRIAN DELEGATION AND PLEDGE INFO

REFS: A) STATE 15566 B) STATE 9421 C) STATE 563 D) VIENNA 50

¶1. On February 21, EmbOff contacted Elfriede More from the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment, to discuss the Austrian delegation to the Washington International Renewable Energy Conference (WIREC), March 4-6, 2008. More, who is Austria's inter-ministerial coordinator for WIREC, confirmed the names of the nine members of the Austrian delegation to WIREC. All delegation members have registered individually.

¶2. Guenter Liebel, Director General (Deputy Minister level) of the Ministry of Agriculture, Environment, Forestry and Water Management, will lead the Austrian delegation. The Ministry of Economics, which is responsible for energy issues, will send Gerhard Burian, Head of the Department for International Regional Policy and Financing. Other relevant delegation members include foreign trade directors of the two major industry lobby groups, the Chairman of the Austrian Biomass Federation, the Austrian Director of the "Energy Globe" Foundation, and the Agriculture Attach at the Austrian Embassy in Washington.

¶3. More regretted that Environment Minister Josef Proell had to cancel his planned participation at WIREC due to a meeting of EU Environment Ministers and "urgent domestic obligations" during the time of the conference. (Note: Austria was not represented by a Minister at WIREC's predecessor conferences in Beijing 2005 and Bonn ¶2004. End Note)

¶4. According to More, Austria will commit to a pledge to the Washington Action Plan, but she could not confirm a concrete figure at this time. Post will follow up with More on the specifics of Austria's pledge.

KILNER#